3: Wallace & Hoebel E-4, 5 (1933, 1945) 1952
NO6 Comanche NO6

372 ly and easily by placing a rag around the point of friction and sprinkling gun powder on the rag. And if rags and gun powder were plentiful, they would load an old gun and shoot it against a tree. The rags would light and could be used to start a fire. This method was especially good in wet weather.

When needed, a low fire was kept fed by wood or buffalo chips gathered by the women and children. Buffalo chips were more desirable, since they burned more slowly and the fire did not die out so readily. Their surface remained year after year, unaffected by the weather, except annually they became a little harder until at last it was almost impossible to cut them with a knife. The under side, not being exposed to the sun, retained a certain amount of moisture longer and was never quite so hard. During cold weather the same fire provided heat both for comfort and for cooking food.

352 513 The bed of the lodge owner was placed at the back of the tipi, that is, directly opposite the entrance in the place of honor. Other beds were placed on one or both sides according to need. In the permanent camp, beds were elevated above the ground from four to six inches by means of pole or rawhide slats supported by a couple of poles. Robes were spread on top to form bedding and cover. In the temporary camp the mattress was spread on the ground. Members of the family simply crawled beneath the skins needed for cover, leaving the remainder for a mattress, and, according to informants, slept with their heads to the west. Buffalo-skin partitions were frequently stretched between beds to give a degree of privacy. Pillows were made from skins of smaller animals and stuffed with grass or straw. Although such beds were soft and fairly comfortable, they were also desirable abodes for both dogs and innumerable vermin.

352 Mattresses served as chairs or for lounging as well as for beds. The master of the lodge always occupied the position directly facing the door. On his left was the place of honor for guests. Lodges of well-to-do persons were provided in modern times with back rests at the head and foot of the mattress.

Ample storage space was available between and underneath the beds and toward the front of the tipi. Extra food, clothing, and small articles were stored principally in parfleche bags. When many buffalo were killed, much dried meat was stored away in parfleches

for use during winter and spring. Other bags contained ornaments, wooden bowls, dishes, small horn spoons, extra clothing, personal belongings, and any odds and ends. In fact, the contents of a parfleche were a perpetual surprise. It might contain anything from a tooth to a gold coin. 352

No tipi furnishings were complete without a supply of utensils or receptacles. They, too, were adapted to the environment and the mobile habits of the owner. No pottery was made or used, simply because it could not be conveniently handled and because more practical materials were at hand. Receptacles for carrying water during travel where water holes were far apart, as was usually the case in Comanche country, needed to be light and to pack well. The paunch of the buffalo met both requirements; therefore, before the introduction of the kettle it served well. A green paunch was hung from a limb or pole and hot stones held inside until the water boiled. Water vessels were also made from "cased" deer skins, that is, skins removed whole. The legs and necks were tied tightly with sinews. Buckets or cups could be made by tying one end of the skin of a leg and fitting a small rod around the inside of the other end. Drinking cups were made from buffalo horns and terrapin shells. A few wooden spoons and bowls were used. They were worked into shape by burning, scraping, and polishing. The Comanches, however, were little interested in this type of receptacle since it was more of a burden than an advantage in their way of life. Consequently, the workmanship was primitive. A very few crude baskets, knives of stone and bone (of metal after contact with the whites), mauls, a digging stick or two, and a few bone needles completed the tipi furnishings. 415 [322] [285]

5: Carlson & Jones E, N-4, 5 (1933)1939
NO6 Comanche NO6

824 276 796 type generally affected by members of the Peyote cult among all Oklahoma tribes," and he also mentions (p. 163) obtaining a necklace of mescal beans from the Iowa, but he does not connect either of these with the peyote ceremony. Schultes (21, p. 141) states that a [789 841] Kiowa peyote leader wore mescal beans on the lower part of his leggings "as a safeguard against stepping on menstrual blood," and La Barre (12, p. 45) observed mescal beans worn on Kiowa peyote moccasins for the same purpose. La Barre (12, p. 106) indicates an [301] unpublished manuscript by Mooney as his source for the statement that the Comanche used to get mescal beans from near Fort Stanton (New Mexico), but apparently only for ornamental purposes.

783 824 Our informants stated that in ceremonies the leaves of the red cedar or juniper (*Juniperus virginiana*) were placed on the fire and the smoke inhaled for purification. Throughout the Plains the red cedar is associated with ceremonies and particularly with purification. La Barre (12, pp. 45–53) mentions several instances of the participation of a "Cedar-man" in the Kiowa–Comanche type of peyote rites. The duties of this individual seem to be to sprinkle "dried and rubbed cedar" on the fire, and at certain stages the members purify themselves in the smoke from this incense. Schultes (21, p. 139) describes the typical manner of use of the cedar incense in peyote ceremonies.

824 352 171 The Comanche brought great quantities of wormwood or "sage" (*Artemisia filifolia*) into the tipi for use as cushions. There is a strong suggestion that they did this in the ceremonial tipi especially, where "sage" (*Artemisia spp.*) was commonly employed as floor covering and cushions. La Barre (12, p. 45) mentions the spreading of sagebrush in the tipi for seats in the Kiowa–Comanche type of peyote ceremony and the resting of the "father peyote" on sprigs of sage (pp. 46–47). Opler (18, pp. 277, 279) says that the Carrizo and the Lipan Apache also strewed it on the floor and describes the placing of the "chief peyote" on it, for the peyote is considered to be friendly to no plant but this. Schultes (21, pp. 139–140) describes approximately the same uses of sage (the species *Artemisia vulgaris*) in the tipi, mentions the chewing of a few leaves of it before eating peyote, and also its place in the sweat lodge.

824 343 Two other plants used by the Comanche in the sweat lodge are the skunkbush (*Rhus trilobata*) and little bluestem grass (*Andropogon scoparius*). The bark of the former was placed in hot water and the

20: Wallace H-4,5 (1945) 1953 NO6 Comanche NO6

to hear the echoes, and one boy asked his mother to make him a bed in the fireplace that he might look up the chimney at the stars. Only 27 Comanche families were living in houses in 1886, and in 1901 the majority of the 3,713 Indians of the reservation lived in tents, tipis, and in small boxed houses along the streams. Water was obtained from running streams and bedding was filthy; there were no screens on the houses, no toilets, and no effort was made to have clean, wholesome food.

After allotments were made, home building increased rapidly. The Indians received payment for their ceded lands and realized that they must cease to wander. White neighbors soon had homes on the tracts they had taken and this stimulated a desire on the part of some families to imitate. It has been stated previously that whites who leased Indian lands for a five-year period were required to erect and leave a three-room house on each allotment. Each year new houses went up; in 1930 twenty-one were built at an average cost of $1,636.22. By that time 90 per cent of the Indian families had good frame homes with sanitary toilets and other outbuildings.[22]

The homes compare to an advantage with the rural homes of white neighbors. Superintendent Buntin in his 1930 report estimated that the value of home furniture averaged slightly more than $300. A few Comanche homes presently are large and clean, are beautifully carpeted and furnished, and have running water, gas, electricity, and occasionally a good library. Since 1930 few families have lived in tipis or tents. But partly due to the depression and later war-time restrictions and partly due to the increasing number of landless heirs, home construction has not kept pace with the increase in the number of families. Since young married couples no longer have land and lease-money, they tend to live with parents.

The Extension Service has sought to improve the standards of home life. It enrolled 525 new members in Indian wo-

22. Buntin, *op. cit.*, sec. II, 30, 18.

21: Burnet T-5 (1818-1819) 1954 NO6 Comanche 06
Texas

[ca. 1818]

sively uncomfortable in cold or wet weather, and are at best but miserable shelters. The interior furniture consists altogether of the skins of different animals, principally Buffaloe robes, which are spread on the ground, and compose their beds, bedding and all. They use neither chairs, stools, nor tables. In the culinary art they have improved but little upon the most obvious suggestions of nature, and are exceedingly filthy and loathsome in all their household economy. They have no cooking utensils of their own construction, and prefer copper kettles on account of their being easily portable and not subject to fracture. They mostly boil their meat, but sometimes broil it on the coals or roast it on spits. During the summer months they often suffer intensely by hunger, purely from defect of art, and frugality in husbanding their means of subsistence. Whole villages are sometimes three or four days without a particle of animal or vegetables food. Their sufferings are borne in common, and if one hunter is more fortunate than the rest, his game is distributed gratuitously through the whole village. In times of scarcity the men hold it a matter of conscience and pride, to sustain the severest portion of the general privations, and to bear them without murmuring. And indeed they manifest a capacity for enduring abstinence, that would almost lead one to imagine nature had furnished their organic system with a peculiar adaptation to the various contingencies of their existence. When meat is abundant, they gorge and gormandize most voraciously, without experiencing any subsequent inconvenience; and when it is scarce, then endure hunger with singular patience, and comparatively trivial relaxation of the animal functions. Habit is capable of controlling both mind and matter. Being accustomed to pursue their game altogether on horseback, they seldom obtain any other than the Buffaloes, of which they usually have an adequate supply during the cold months, from November to March. They reserve but little from the winter's profusion to supply the scarcity of summer, having no other mode of preventing putrefaction, than by cutting the meat into very thin slices, and exposing it to the sun until it is entirely desicated by exhalation. As you may

32: Gilles O,X-3 (1902-c.1910) 1974
NO6 Comanche NO6
Oklahoma

883 177 [291] ingly remembered none of the white man's ways. And they seemed to have forgotten the old tribal ways as well.

In my thinking, I found it convenient to put the women and girls in yet another group. One of the first things I learned was the taboo which prevented women and girls from talking to men, Indians or white, other than their own menfolks, excepting on the most necessary occasions. Because of this I never addressed them unless they spoke to me.

562 191 [123]

I was consciously making every effort to learn as much of the language as I could, and in time I was able to catch on quickly to what the men were talking about and to follow their conversation. But the women seemed to have a vocabulary of their own. I would often listen to a group of women talking in the store, or out in the camp, but I could distinguish only an occasional word.

124 [122] [198]

Those who conceived of educating the Indian youths also conceived the idea that the educating must be done in faraway places, and little has been done through the years to change the practice. Even as I type this article, several hundred Indian children from New Mexico, Arizona, and other western states are attending Chilocco Indian School in northern Oklahoma.

657 871 [171]

While in Carlisle or other Indian boarding schools, Indian children had slept in clean beds with sheets changed every week. They had sat in chairs at a table with a clean tablecloth and had eaten food served from clean dishes. They had been taught the use of the knife, fork, and spoon. But when the Indian boy arrived home for good, he had only his parents' camp to go to. Though the Comanche families were living on their allotments, they continued to live a camp life, much the same as they had lived the previous twenty-five years as Reservation Indians.

657 871 177 178

In this camp our Carlisle graduate sat on the ground, or a log, or a goods box. He ate his food from a pie tin and was served directly from the kettle in which the food had been cooked. If a boy was lucky, he had a fork and spoon to go along with his pocketknife as eating utensils.

352 244

Spring, summer, and fall they all slept in the brush arbor on platforms and under seldom-washed cotton blankets. When the northers became blue and came with regularity, they slept in conventional tents, either on the ground or on low platforms constructed with poles. Once in a while, as I rode on my collection trips, I would see a

513 [342] 342

32: Gilles O,X-3 (1902-c.1910) 1974
NO6 Comanche NO6
Oklahoma

595 one wife was purchased. Sisters often trained themselves so that they could be wives of the same man, one learning to be a good horsewoman and the other to be expert in the tanning of hides and making of clothes, one complementing the other, in the hope that they might be purchased at the same time and so remain together.

If, in due time, there came to be need of a third wife, the rule was that she be young and healthy, capable of taking over the burdens of the older women. When the young wife bore a baby for the camp there was rejoicing, not only by the husband but by the other wives as well. This was especially true if it was a boy baby. (This part appealed to me. Just think of a family life where they never ran out of babies!)

595 855 I never once saw an older wife scold or mistreat the child of another wife. In fact, I never saw a Comanche woman mistreat any woman's child. It was no uncommon sight to see one wife caring for the children, while the other wife or wives were working, say, at hauling up wood for the camp.

At the time when I knew them, the Comanches were still living 657 strictly a camp life. Where it was possible, the Indian Department had [423] fenced the family allotments all into one enclosure or pasture, using [417] four strands of barbed wire and posts every rod. The department had [342] also built each family a box house—in most instances measuring fourteen by twenty-eight feet, shingle-roofed, and set on a foundation of rock piers about four feet apart.

342 [592] Obviously, a family consisting of the husband, two to three wives, and several children could not live in a space that small. For spring, summer, and fall use a family would construct a brush arbor. Forked posts were cut so as to be about seven or eight feet tall when the lower end was set in the ground. Poles were laid from one fork to another, and in turn numerous cross poles were laid on them. Then a thick layer of brush with leaves was piled on the cross poles. This layer was thick enough to repel the sun's heat and shed the water from a reasonable rain. From time to time, as they were needed, additional layers of brush were applied.

This arbor served as living quarters for the family the greater part of the year. Since the sides were left open, whatever breeze there was, [352] from whichever direction it came, was utilized. Platforms, placed on [513] forked sticks and about three feet from the ground, served as beds.

252 The cooking was done on an open fire, just below the bank of a

32: Gilles O,X-3 (1902-c.1910) 1974
NO6 Comanche NO6
Oklahoma

595 462 went about her tasks cheerfully and willingly. Whichever one of the women divided the labor reserved enough for herself so that she was just as busy as the other women.

857 462 The little girls of the family stayed close to the women the day through, and performed tasks suitable for their ages. But the little boys roamed far and wide, never seeming to have any duties except when they were helping their father with the horses.

521 522 462 [296] [124] During group tasks there was always quite a bit of conversation and considerable laughing. In warm weather the women would go to the creek together, select a place in the shade where the water was about six or eight inches deep, and sit in the water on the sandy bottom to do the family wash. I never learned what the talk and laughter were about, as I was never able to accumulate a squaw vocabulary.

521 562 609 124 [198] (Comanche women held only the most necessary conversation with any man, Indian or white, other than their own menfolks. And while I was generally able to figure out the subject of the men's conversation and follow its progress, I seldom recognized a word used by the women when they conversed among themselves. At times I was inclined to think they even had a different language.)

595 The same air of camaraderie seemed to prevail whenever the wives were together in a group. I noticed it in the store whenever there was only one family present. Their trading done, the wives would draw

516 [352] their chairs into a group and converse. They never had chairs in their camps, but the women never passed up the several chairs we had in the store—although once in a while some quite old squaw would insist on sitting on the floor. If the chairs were all occupied, the women never hesitated to sit on the floor, and the people trading would walk around them.

595 Wherever you saw a man's wives—in town, on the reservation, or at a celebration—they always formed a group. You would not find one wife in a store and another out on the street. Two or more groups of wives would often chat together in the store or sit together in the shade on the reservation or at a powwow.

595 422 294 One custom which seemed odd to me was that of each wife's having her own sewing machine. The sewing done by the average family was not so extensive that one machine would not easily have sufficed. Yet each wife would have her own—something I had been alerted to look for by an article that had appeared in the *Star* commenting that each of Quanah Parker's wives had her individual sewing machine.